

REMARKS

Claims 4, 14, and 18 have been canceled. Claims 1, 8 and 15 have been amended. Claims 1-3, 5-13, 15-17 and 19-20 are pending.

Allowable Subject Matter

Applicants acknowledge and appreciate the Examiner's allowance of subject matter in the Office Action dated December 3, 2008. The Examiner indicated that dependent claim 18 would be allowed if written in independent form. Applicants have incorporated the claimed features of claim 18 into independent claim 15, including the intervening dependent claim features. Applicants have incorporated similar features in the other independent claims (claims 1 and 8). The amendments made to these claims are shown in marked-up form. Applicants respectfully assert that claims 1, 8 and 15, and all their respective dependent claims, are now in condition for allowance.

Applicants respectfully assert that in light of the amendments and arguments provided throughout the prosecution of the present application, all claims of the present application are now allowable and, therefore, request that a Notice of Allowance be issued. Reconsideration of the present application is respectfully requested.

If for any reason the Examiner finds the application other than in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to call the undersigned attorney at the Houston, Texas telephone number (713) 934-4064 to discuss the steps necessary for placing the application in condition for allowance.

Respectfully submitted,

WILLIAMS, MORGAN & AMERSON, P.C.
CUSTOMER NO. 46240

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By: /Ruben S. Bains/
Ruben S. Bains, Reg. No. 46,532
10333 Richmond, Suite 1100
Houston, Texas 77042
(713) 934-4064
(713) 934-7011 (facsimile)

ATTORNEY FOR APPLICANT(S)